

The President's Radio Address

April 13, 1996

Good morning. This week, on April the 19th, we mark one of America's saddest anniversaries, the first anniversary of the bombing of the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City. It is when the American spirit is at its best that we find renewal in even the most desolate of our tragedies. And that is what the people of Oklahoma City have managed somehow to do.

They have shown us that while we cannot guarantee our children a world free of madmen, we can promise them that we will always build and rebuild safe places to sustain and nurture their new lives. They have reminded us that while we can never call back the souls that were torn from us, we can prove that the forces of hatred and division are no match for the goodness in the human spirit.

Oklahoma City reminds us of something else, that we must give nothing less than everything we have in the fight against terrorism in our country and around the world, for the forces that are sparking so much of the progress we see today—lightning-fast technology, easier travel, open borders—these forces also make it easier for people with a grudge or a cause to launch a terrorist attack against innocent people.

In this new era, fighting terrorism must be a top law enforcement and national security priority for the United States. On our own and with our allies, we have put in place strong sanctions against states that sponsor terrorism. We have improved our cooperation with other nations to deter terrorists before they act, to capture them when they do, and to see to it that they are brought to justice. We've increased funding, personnel, and training for our own law enforcement agencies to deal with terrorists.

But we must do even more. That is why, more than a year ago, I sent to Congress legislation that would strengthen our ability to investigate, prosecute, and punish terrorist activity. After Oklahoma City, I made it even stronger. My efforts were guided by three firm goals: first, to protect American lives without infringing on American rights; second, to give the FBI and other law enforce-

ment officials the tools they have asked for to do the job; and third, to make sure terrorists are barred from this country.

In the wake of Oklahoma City, Congress promised to send me the bill 6 weeks after the tragic bombing. And yet unbelievably, almost an entire year has passed, and Congress still has not managed to send me strong anti-terrorism legislation. There is simply no excuse for this foot-dragging. This bill should have been law a long time ago.

So I urge Congress: Make it happen. Pass anti-terrorism legislation now. In the name of the children and all the people of Oklahoma City, I say to Congress, do not let another day go by in which America does not have the tools it needs to fight terrorism. It's essential that Congress send me the right anti-terrorism legislation, legislation that finally will give law enforcement the upper hand.

When I met with leaders of the congressional majority shortly after the bombing, they assured me that Congress would give the American people strong anti-terrorism legislation. They haven't. While the Senate passed a solid bill, the House absolutely gutted it. Under pressure from the Washington gun lobby, House Republicans took that bill apart piece by piece. Well, now it's time they put it back together. America cannot afford to settle for a fake anti-terrorism bill. We need the real thing. And on my watch, I'm determined to get it.

This is what real anti-terrorism should have: First, we need explicit authority to prevent terrorist groups like Hamas from raising money in the United States for their dirty deeds. Second, we need authority to deport quickly foreigners who abuse our hospitality by supporting terrorist activities away from or within our shores. Second, we need to give law enforcement officials the ability to use high-tech surveillance and other investigative tools to keep up with stealthy, fast-moving terrorists.

And we need a provision to mark chemically the explosive materials terrorists use to build their deadly bombs. If we know where the explosives come from, we have an edge in tracking down the criminals who use them. These taggants work. In fact, when they were being tested just a few years ago, they helped

us to catch a man who had killed someone with a car bomb. Law enforcement officials believe that of the more than 13,000 bombing crimes in the last 5 years, as many as 30 percent could have been solved faster with taggants.

Yet the Republicans in Congress continue to oppose this commonsense initiative. Why? Because the Washington gun lobby told them to. One Republican congressman had another reason, an unbelievable one. He actually told his own committee chairman, "I trust Hamas more than my own Government." Well, I don't. And I don't think most Americans or most Members of Congress in either party do.

I urge Congress to change course. Put the national interest before the special interests. Give law enforcement the ability to trace these explosives using bombs that kill Americans.

We know acts of terror are no match for the human spirit. In the last year, the people of Oklahoma City have proved this. We know we can heal from terrorism. But now we must do even more to stop it before it happens. A strong anti-terrorism bill will help us to do just that. And that's why it must be the law of the land.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:05 p.m. on April 12 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 13.

Exchange With Reporters in Anchorage, Alaska

April 15, 1996

President's Visit to Korea

Q. [*The exchange is joined in progress.*]—your stop in Korea?

The President. Have a talk with President Kim and we'll have some things to say there about the Korean situation. It's much better than it was 3 years ago when I took office in terms of trying to minimize the North Korean nuclear problem, which was a big security problem for the United States.

And then I'm going on to Japan to reaffirm the security partnership we have with the Japanese and Asia, and then on to Russia to deal with the problems of nuclear safety.

We've made a lot of progress in the last 3 years; we've got a lot to do. We have a big job to get a comprehensive test ban treaty passed, and then to deal with the aftermath of the cold war, to deal with all of those nuclear materials that are out there. We want to make sure that they don't fall into the wrong hands and someday get put to the wrong uses. And I'm glad to be back in Alaska, even at 2 a.m. in the morning, and I thank you for coming out. I'm sorry that you all had to stay up so late.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Q. Mr. President, one of the big questions concerning a lot of Alaskans is the issue of oil drilling in ANWR. Do you think there is, in the near future, any possibility of doing that environmentally sensitive development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

The President. I don't know. I received your congressional delegation and I listened to what they had to say, and we have continued to work not only in Alaska, but all across America on the whole issue of reconciling development and the environment, and we continue to look for ways to do it. But you know, right now the more imminent issue as Congress comes back is whether we can pass a budget for the Interior Department that deals with the question of the Tongass. And that is the one I think that concerns Alaska that will be up on the plate in the next couple of weeks, and we've worked very hard out here to try to deal with the legitimate interests of the small loggers and trying to do some work there while preserving the old-growth trees that are virtually irreplaceable. So I'm hoping that that can be worked out. We've worked very, very hard on it, and we'll just take these issues as they come and see what happens.

President's Visit to Korea

Q. President Clinton, looking at your stop in Korea, what do you hope to accomplish there with President Kim?

The President. Well, we're doing a lot of work on that. I want to wait until I see President Kim and make a definitive announcement of any kind. But we are essentially continuing on the path of a charter back in 1993. We're working on ways to not only keep the